

CITY OF WILLMAR

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
7:00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8, 2020
CONFERENCE ROOM #1
CITY OFFICE BUILDING**

Chair: Steve Gardner

Vice Chair: Rolf Standfuss

Members: Jeffery Kimpling, Cletus Frank, Jonathan Marchand, Terry Sieck, Dr. Jerry Kjergaard, and Christina Nelson.

AGENDA

1. Meeting Called to Order
2. Reorganization
3. Minutes of December 18, 2019 meeting
4. 7:01 p.m. Bargains & Blessings Rezone I-1 to GB Public Hearing
5. 2019 Year in Review
6. Miscellany
7. Adjourn

**WILLMAR PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF WILLMAR, MN
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2019**

MINUTES

1. The Willmar Planning Commission met on Wednesday, December 18, 2019, at 7:00 p.m. at the Willmar City Offices Conference Room #1.

Members Present: Steve Gardner, Rolf Standfuss, Cletus Frank, Jonathan Marchand, Terry Sieck, and Christina Nelson

Members Absent: Jeff Kimpling, Dr. Jerry Kjergaard, and Rhonda Otteson

Others Present: Sarah Swedburg – Planner, Aaron Backman – Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar EDC Executive Director, Connie Schmoll – Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar EDC, Gary Laughlin & Ryan Laughlin – Quick Signs, Aaron Pilarski – Willmar Public Schools, Teresa Brown, Doug Zondervan, and Becky Zondervan – Bargains & Blessings, Bruce Vogel – Willmar, Mitch Schueler & Brian Harberts – Epitopix.

2. MINUTES: Minutes from the November 20th meeting were approved as presented.
3. WILLMAR PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL SIGN – SIGN PERMIT 19-60: Staff presented a request for a sign permit by the Willmar Public School District on property described as follows: That part of the Northeast ¼ described as follows: Beginning at the Northeast Corner of Section 1, Then South 1542.43 feet, then West 1737.09 feet, then North 1530.18 feet to the North line of Section 1, then East 1737.09 feet to the point of beginning, Section 1, Township 119N, Range 35W, Kandiyohi County. Staff explained that the sign is larger than those approved for other Public School District sites, such as the Middle & Elementary Schools. However, the proposed square footage is proportional to the size of the High School parcel.

Aaron Pilarski, Building & Grounds Manager for the Willmar Public School District, explained their desire to move the sign from its current location on County Road 9 to the entrance on Civic Center Drive because of the heavier traffic along Civic Center Drive. They also envision utilizing the digital sign for school & community events at the future local option sales tax facilities in this area.

The Planning Commission discussed desire for clear traffic visibility underneath the sign. Gary Laughlin of Quick Signs confirmed that the distance from the ground to the bottom of the sign is twelve (12) feet, providing adequate visibility for drivers.

Mr. Standfuss made a motion, seconded by Mr. Marchand, to approve the sign permit with conditions that the sign maintain a ten foot setback from the right-of-way and easements maintained or a land transfer between the City & Public School District take place.

The motion carried.

4. COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR REZONE EXTENSION DISCUSSION: Staff presented a preliminary request behalf of Bargains & Blessings of Willmar, MN for the extension of the commercial corridor leading into the Industrial Park on Industrial Dr SW. Staff reminded the

commission that this corridor was created in 2018 for the use of the old Peart & Associates building for the Willmar Child Care Center, providing services for the businesses & employees in the Industrial Park area.

Aaron Backman & Connie Schmoll of the Kandiyohi County & City of Willmar Economic Development Commission informed the Commission that despite the number of businesses that have toured the old Molenaar building, the infrastructure standards are outdated for what current industrial users are looking for. Therefore, the building has yet to be occupied by an interested party.

Teresa Brown & Becky Zondervan of Bargains & Blessings told the commission that the store is running tight on space, and they envision a number of reuse opportunities for this building, should it be rezoned for Commercial use.

Mr. Backman mentioned the onsite parking space, in addition to the large lot size that would allow for optimum use of this facility. He expressed his favor of this user at this location.

Staff expressed some concern of the users North of this site of interest, currently occupied by Woody's Trucking & Fed Ex. If the existing Commercial Corridor is expanded south, to encompass the Molenaar building, it would be in the best interest to include the properties that these industrial users currently occupy. They would be allowed to continue at this location, despite but there would be some concern of constraints for future property owners, if those buildings were up to industrial user standards.

The Planning Commission gave staff direction to set a public hearing to extend the commercial corridor. Prior to the public hearing, staff will contact Woody's Trucking & Fed Ex to discuss the rezoning of their properties.

5. EPITOPIX ANNEXATION – FILE NO. 19-01: Staff presented an annexation petition that was received by a number of property owners on the West side of the City Limits for the annexation of property described as follows: The South 435 feet of the North 479 feet of the East 600 feet of the Southeast ¼ of the Southeast ¼ of Section 7, Township 119N, Range 35W, subject to the right of the public for road purposes over the Easterly 33 feet thereof, and excepting the following two tracts of land: (1) The South 125 feet of the North 479 feet of the East 361 feet of the Southeast ¼ of the Southeast ¼ of Section 7, Township 119N, Range 35W. (2) The North 116 feet of the South 241 feet of the North 479 feet of East 361 feet of the Southeast ¼ of the Southeast ¼ of Section 7, Township 119N, Range 35W; AND The South 175 feet of the North 529 feet of the East 361 feet of the Southeast ¼ of the Southeast ¼, Section 7, Township 119N, Range 35W; AND All that part of the West ½ of the Southwest ¼ of Section 8, Township 119N, Range 35W of the 5th Prime Meridian lying South of the right-of-way of the railway Burlington Northern Railroad Company (formerly Great Northern Railway Company), Kandiyohi County Minnesota; AND The East 300 feet of the North 870 feet of the Northwest ¼ of the Northwest ¼ of Section 17, Township 119N, Range 35W; AND The North 116 feet of the South 241 feet of the North 497 feet of the East 361 feet of the Southeast ¼ of the Southeast ¼ of Section 7, Township 119N, Range 35W; AND The West 720 feet of the Northwest ¼ of the Northwest ¼ of Section 17, Township 119N, Range 35W; AND The East 600 feet of the Northwest ¼ of the Northwest ¼ excluding the East 300 feet of the North 870 feet of the Northwest ¼ of the Northwest ¼ of Section 17, Township 119N, Range 35W.

Staff reminded the Planning Commission that this annexation was introduced earlier this year, when the EDC was submitting an application for an IBDPI Grant to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development for the expansion of Public water & sanitary sewer

utilities. Mr. Backman confirmed that the City has been awarded and accepted a \$1,300,000 grant from DEED for this expansion project.

Mitch Schueler told the Planning Commission that this connection to public utilities will allow for greater expansion opportunity that EpiTopix & their parent company have planned, as well as significant cost savings. Brian Harberts noted that this is a major stepping stone in solidifying Willmar as EpiTopix's US Headquarters.

The Planning Commission reviewed the Comprehensive Plan's Goals, Objectives, and Policies, as well as the anticipated use of this area west of the City Limits.

Mr. Frank made a motion, seconded by Ms. Nelson, that the Annexation is in alignment with the City's Comprehensive Plan & recommendation for Annexation approval be forwarded to City Council.

The motion carried.

6. OPPORTUNITY ZONE OVERLAY DISTRICT INCENTIVES DISCUSSION: Staff presented a draft list of incentives to be included in an Overlay District to further encourage development with the federally designated Opportunity Zone. This list has also been presented to the Community Development Committee and City Council.

Mr. Backman reminded the Commission that a mark of a thriving community is a thriving downtown. While we have seen significant investment downtown, especially in institutional buildings (e.g. Rice Memorial Hospital), the designation of our Opportunity Zone positions the City to see even more investment in this area and the neighborhoods directly surrounding downtown.

Ms. Schmoll informed the Commission that the EDC & City Planning & Development Staff are currently drafting an Opportunity Zone Prospectus document to help market and solicit interested developers.

The Commission favored middle ground when discussing preservation of historic buildings. They want to see preservation encouraged, but they would prefer to avoid locking in properties to non-demolition or demolition-required scenarios.

Staff will continue drafting Overlay District language to create incentive opportunities above and beyond the capital gains incentives for developments in the Opportunity Zone.

6. MISCELLANY: Staff provided an update received from Kwik Trip that they have begun the process for construction of their downtown location in the spring of 2020. Planning Commission approved their project in late 2017; they will be applying for a building permit in the coming weeks.

United Community Action Partnership is pursuing State licensing to operate their Headstart program from the old Kandi Power Cooperative office space on Business Highway 71 North. Mr. Marchand said that they are very excited for their program to be located in one facility again. This use is permitted outright, therefore the Planning Commission will not see any land use applications come forward.

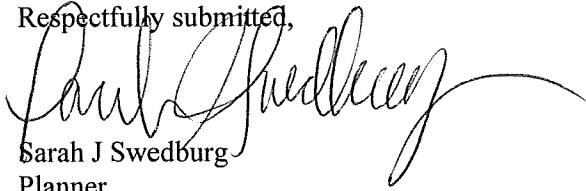
Staff inquired about the first Planning Commission meeting in January, as the regularly scheduled meeting falls on January 1st, and City Offices are closed. The Commission agreed that postponing

the meeting until January 8th would be best. Staff will post a notice for this change to the regularly scheduled meeting.

Finally, Staff informed the Commission that there are no terms that ended on the Commission at the end of 2019. However, there were 2 terms that ended on the Board of Zoning Appeals & the City is currently seeking two new community members to appoint to these vacant seats. Anyone interested in filling these rolls can contact Janell Sommers or Sarah Swedburg at City Offices.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah J. Swedburg", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Sarah J Swedburg
Planner

NOTICE OF HEARING FOR PROPOSED REZONING

Notice is hereby given that the Willmar Planning Commission will meet at the Willmar City Office Building (Conference Room #1, main floor), 333 6th St. SW, Willmar, Minnesota, at 7:01 p.m. on Wednesday, January 8, 2020, to consider the application of BRZ Vineyards, Willmar, MN and City initiated change in zoning from I-1 (Limited Industrial) to GB (General Business) extending the commercial corridor to provide services to the Industrial Park area on property described as follows: Part of the North ½ of the Southeast ¼, Section 16, Township 119, Range 35.

All property owners or residents living in the vicinity of the above-described property are hereby notified of the public hearing and that they may appear in person or be represented by counsel to be heard on this matter. The Planning Commission meeting agenda and packet (including a specific map) can be found on the Calendar on the home page of the City's website (www.willmarmn.gov).

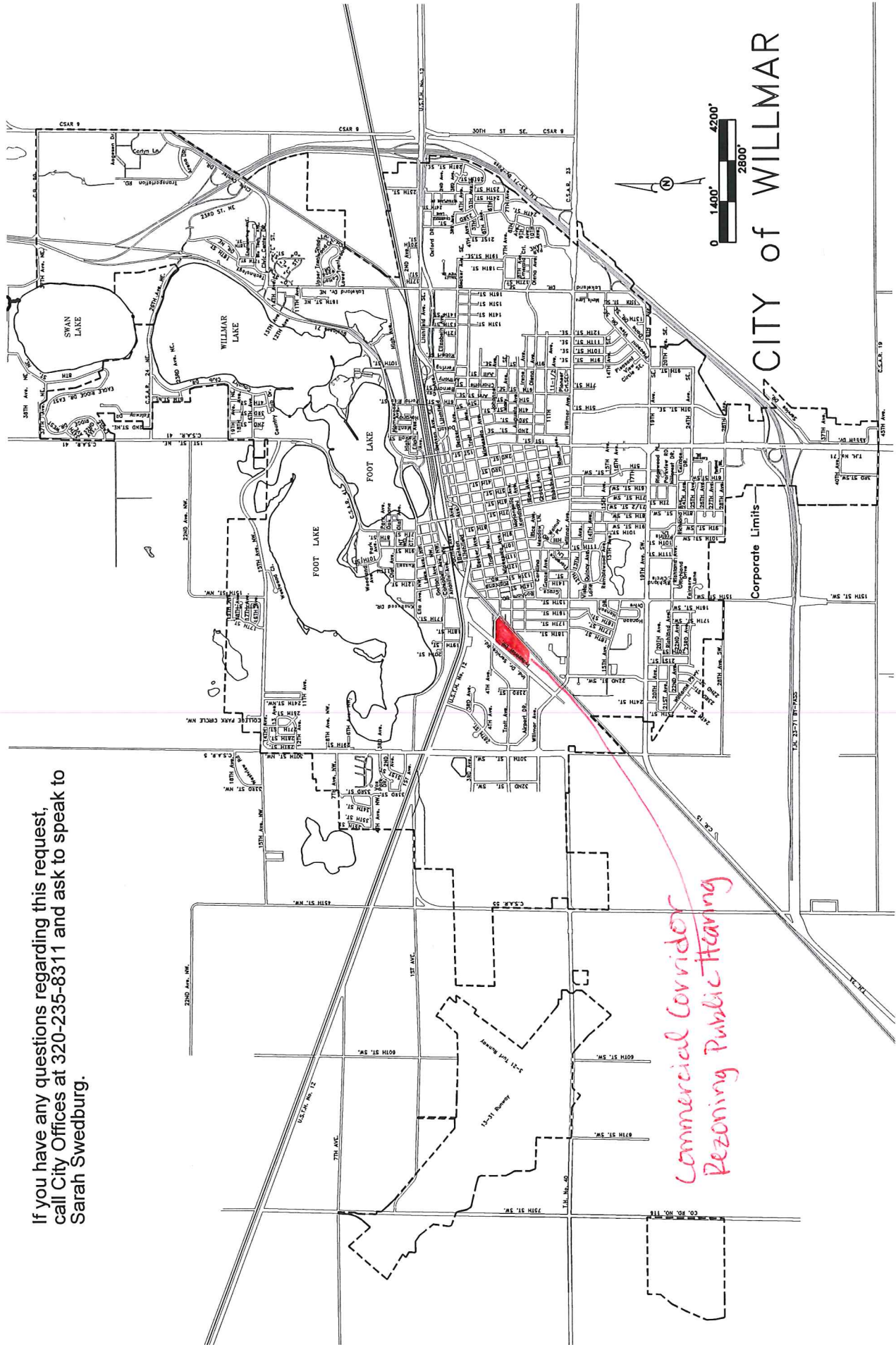
December 27, 2019
Date

Sarah J. Swedburg
Planner

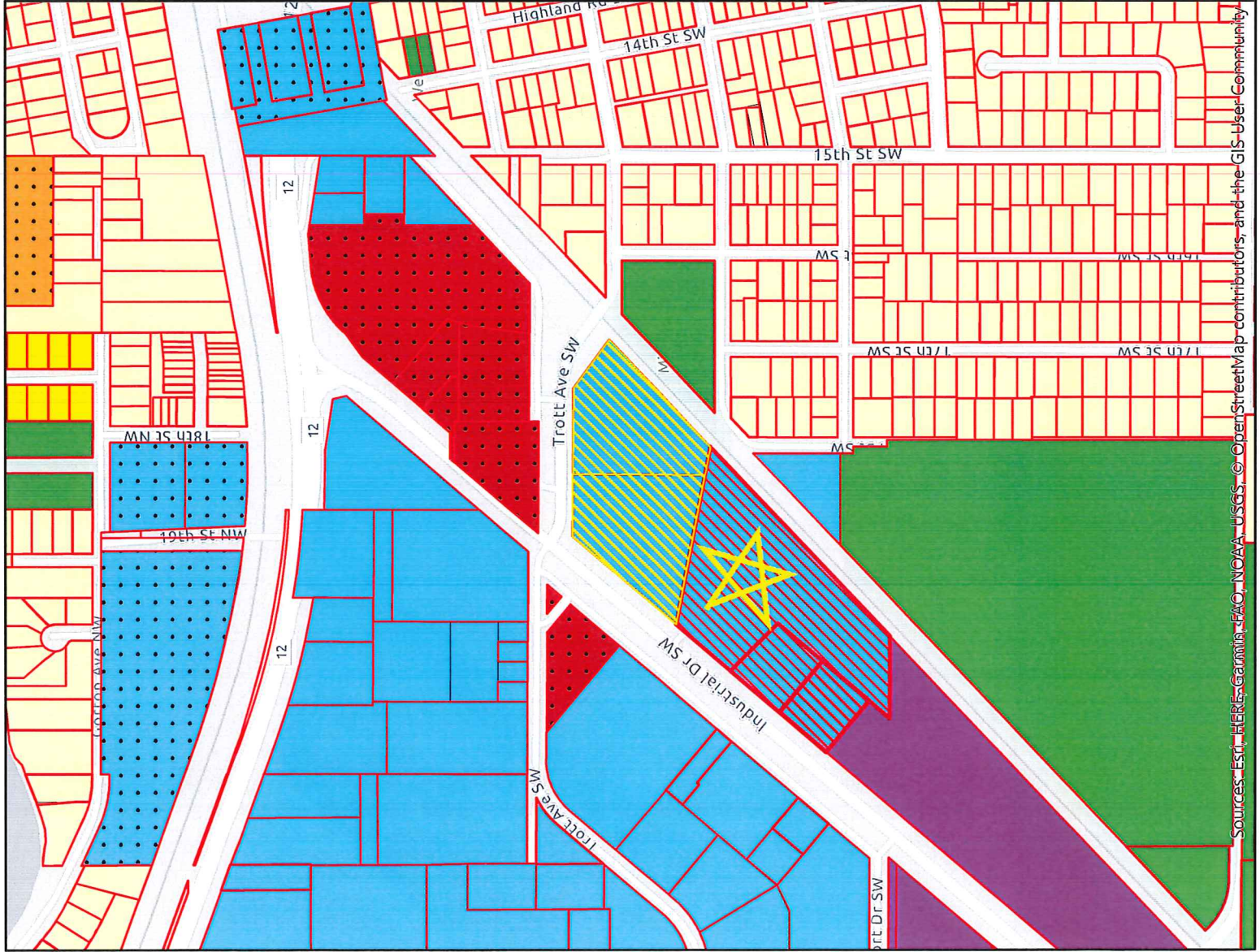
Si Usted no lee inglés o si este aviso no contiene una explicación suficiente, por favor comuníquese con Abby al 235-0850 ext. 1100, de Heartland Community Action Agency.

Haddii Aadan Akhriyi Karin Ama Aadan Fahmeeynin Ogeeysiiskan, Fadlan Soo Wac: Sahra Gure, West Central Interpreting Services, LLC (320)235-0165 ama (320)441-8555.

If you have any questions regarding this request, call City Offices at 320-235-8311 and ask to speak to Sarah Swedburg.



Commercial Corridor
Rezoning Public Hearing



History:

In 2018, the Planning Commission created a Commercial Corridor along Industrial Drive SW from Highway 12 to Trott Avenue SW to allow for commercial amenities & services to be in close proximity to the Industrial Park.

Current Issues:

In this oldest part of the industrial park, it is proving difficult to find interested industrial users/buyers due to the properties being small in size & the buildings not up to current standards, such as sidewall heights.

Woody's Trucking & Fed Ex both operate out of the properties symbolized on the map with yellow stripes (just north of the starred property).

Request:

The City & EDC have been approached by another property owner & potential user who would like to request this corridor be expanded further south.

Zoning

Government	1 & 2 Family Residential
General Business	Low-Density Multi-Family Residential
Light Industrial	Medium-Density Multi-Family Residential
Heavy Industrial	
Park	